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THE THIRD BOOK OF THE MACCABEES.

It will probably never be easy to discriminate critically between the exaggerations and hyperboles on the one hand and, on the other, the substratum of authentic facts contained in the so-called *Third Book of the Maccabees*. Yet if recent investigation has affected this question at all, the tendency is towards a stronger belief in the historical genuineness of certain parts of that narrative. In the first place, it is obvious to a close reader of Polybius and of Plutarch's *Life of Cleomenes* that the writer of 3 Macc. presents the same picture of Ptolemy Philopator's character as do the former authorities. The writer of 3 Macc. may have been unjust to Ptolemy, but he had the same prejudices as those displayed by all other "foreign" critics of that monarch.

But we can go a little further than this now. Prof. J. P. Mahaffy's work on *The Empire of the Ptolemies* (Macmillan, 1895) may be almost described as an attempt to go behind the "foreign" historians, and to present the Ptolemies from the "native" Egyptian point of view. Ptolemy Philopator's reign, according to this latest of its chroniclers, "was not so worthless and mischievous as it appears. Had Polybius and Plutarch been lost, and inscriptions only been preserved, we should have formed quite another picture of Philopator" (p. 270). Prof. Mahaffy shows from inscriptions in the various temples, as e. g. of the Paphian Aphrodite, that this Ptolemy was a man of liberal propensities, so far at least as his money was concerned. We are here reminded strongly of 3 Macc. i. 7 : ποιήσας δὲ τοῦτο, καὶ

τοῖς τεμένεσσι δωρεὰς ἀπονείμας, εὐθαρσεῖς τοὺς ὑποτεταγμένους κατέστησε. Further, Philopator was a great builder. "The remains of Philopator's work are more important than any left us by his predecessors, and they extend far beyond them to that region of the Nile which seems hitherto untouched by Ptolemaic influences. Not only did he build at Thebes, not only was he the second founder of Edfu, and busy at Philae, but he began the exquisite little shrine now known as Deyr el Medineh, over against Luxor. In fact we can clearly perceive that his architectural activity extended all over Upper Egypt. But this is not all. Now for the first time we find Ptolemaic cartouches in buildings as far off as Dakkeh, fully fifty miles above the First Cataract. They are added by Ptolemy Philopator to the inner shrine or adytum built by the Nubian King Ergamenes, who, as Diodorus tells us, broke through the bondage of the priests, and being educated in Hellenic learning, would not obey their summons to put himself to death" (pp. 272-3).

May we not here perceive part of the real motive which perhaps induced Philopator to persist so strongly in the desire to inspect the innermost shrine of the Temple at Jerusalem? It always seemed to me difficult to believe that, for all his Bacchanalian propensities as described by Polybius, Plutarch, and the author of 3 Macc., Philopator should have been the man to desecrate a foreign shrine. Besides the edifices already alluded to, and the ambitious building described by Athenaeus (v. 37-9), Philopator built many temples on the Upper Nile, "and the gods and goddesses of Nubia, and the deified Nile, offer him gifts" (p. 273). On this Prof. Mahaffy remarks: "The building of so many temples throughout Upper Egypt points to leisure from internal disturbances, a considerable outlay, and a disposition to conciliate the national [i. e. not his own] religion. It may have been the policy of the wily Sosibios, the king's minister, but could hardly have been carried out against the king's consent, so that Philopator, though the Jews believed him to have been very adverse to

their religion, was not opposed to that compromise which led ultimately to a re-assertion of the old creed, and of native ideas, against the imported Hellenism." Conciliation, rather than violent interference, mark Philopator's nature, and this would seem to render the narrative of 3 Macc. entirely incredible, when it represents him as a rabid missionary for the cult of Dionysus. But two considerations occur to me against this view. First, the writer of 3 Macc. nowhere asserts that Philopator had any religious animosity against the Jews. He simply tells us: *προέθετο δὲ δημοσίᾳ κατὰ τοῦ ἔθνους διαδοῦναι ψόγον* (3 Macc. ii. 27). The last word implies no religious persecution at all, and it may well be that the Jews read into Ptolemy's hostility a meaning it did not necessarily possess. Even according to 3 Macc., Ptolemy Philopator makes no attempt to interfere with the Jewish worship. It is worth contrasting the language used here with that of 1 Macc. regarding Antiochus Epiphanes:—

1 Macc. i. 41 seq.

καὶ ἔγραψεν ὁ βασιλεὺς πάσῃ τῇ βασιλείᾳ αὐτοῦ εἶναι πάντας εἰς λαὸν ἓνα . . . καὶ ἀπέστειλεν ὁ βασιλεὺς βιβλία ἐν χειρὶ ἀγγέλων εἰς Ἱερουσαλὴμ καὶ τὰς πόλεις Ἰούδα, πορευθῆναι ὀπίσω νομίμων ἀλλοτρίων τῆς γῆς, καὶ κωλύσαι ὀλοκαντώματα καὶ θυσίαν καὶ σπονδὴν ἐκ τοῦ ἁγιάσματος, καὶ βεβηλωσαι σάββατα καὶ ἑορτὰς . . . ὥστε ἐπιλαθέσθαι τοῦ νόμου, καὶ ἀλλάζαι πάντα τὰ δικαιώματα.

3 Macc. ii. 27 seq.

ἐπὶ τοῦ κατὰ τὴν αὐλὴν πύργου στήλην ἀναστήσας, ἐκόλαψεν γραφήν, μηδὲνα τῶν μὴ θυνόντων εἰς τὰ ἱερὰ αὐτῶν εἰσιέναι, . . . ἵνα δὲ μὴ τοῖς πᾶσιν ἀπεχθόμενος φαίνεται, ὑπέγραψεν, ἔαν δέ τινες ἐξ αὐτῶν προαιρῶνται ἐν τοῖς κατὰ τὰς τελετὰς μεμνημένοις ἀναστρέφεισθαι, τούτους ἰσοπολίτας Ἀλεξ-ανδρεῦσιν εἶναι.

Mr. Bissell's note on iii. 21 (a passage to be further discussed below) is therefore quite erroneous. "The Jewish religion," comments Mr. Bissell, "the king regarded as one which was now to be rooted out." In point of fact, Ptolemy

merely wishes the Jews to join in the Dionysian rites as a preliminary to following their own worship; he does not prohibit Jewish rites, nor does he foist Bacchus into the Jewish synagogue. We know (cf. Schürer, *History of the Jewish People*, English Translation, II, 2, p. 275) that in the very towns where the Jews enjoyed *ισοπολιτεία*, they excited much animosity by declining to worship the local gods as well as their own God. Josephus reports (*Antiquities*, XII, 3, § 2) a similar episode in Antioch. Ptolemy's action was accordingly just the desire to inflict a *ψόγον* (3 Macc. ii. 27) by forcing the Jews to abandon their old immunity from this local condition of citizenship (cf. Schürer, p. 274). Just as we should have expected, then, a careful examination of 3 Macc. implies no severe religious persecution, though we cannot doubt that the Jews themselves wished to regard any attack on their privileges as an attack on Judaism. Yet 3 Macc. is comparatively free from this suggestion, the religious colouring of 3 Macc. being far less conspicuous than is that of 1 Macc. But my point is that, though the subsequent elaboration be unhistorical, the author of 3 Macc. unconsciously reveals as the real motive for Philopator's desire to enter the Temple a consideration which becomes luminous and credible from the remarks of Prof. Mahaffy quoted above. For this is what we read in 3 Macc. i. 8 seq.: τῶν δὲ Ἰουδαίων διαπεμφαμένων πρὸς αὐτὸν ἀπὸ τῆς γερουσίας, καὶ τῶν πρεσβυτέρων τοὺς ἀσπασομένους αὐτὸν καὶ ξένια κομιοῦντας καὶ ἐπὶ τοῖς συμβεβηκόσι συγχαρησομένους, συνέβη μᾶλλον αὐτὸν προθυμηθῆναι ὥς τάχιστα πρὸς αὐτοὺς παραγενέσθαι. διακομισθεὶς δὲ εἰς Ἱεροσόλυμα, καὶ θύσας τῷ μεγίστῳ Θεῷ καὶ χάριτας ἀποδιδούς καὶ τῶν ἐξῆς τι τῷ τόπῳ ποιήσας, καὶ δὴ παραγενόμενος εἰς τὸν τόπον, καὶ τῇ σπουδαιότητι καὶ εὐπρεπείᾳ καταπλαγείς, θαυμάσας δὲ καὶ τὴν τοῦ Ἱεροῦ εὐταξίαν, ἐνεθυμήθη βουλευέσασθαι εἰσελθεῖν εἰς τὸν ναόν. From this it is clear that Philopator's architectural tastes lent force to what was perhaps a mercenary motive (see p. 53 below). In point of fact the admiration he felt for the building is

distinctly assigned in 3 Macc. itself as his motive. Does not this fit in admirably with the propensity of Philopator towards building, a propensity now first clearly revealed by Prof. Mahaffy's researches? That Philopator had an artistic motive, as well as the mercenary one to be discussed below, is clear from his naïve surprise that there could be any *religious* objection to his proceeding further: *καὶ ἐπυνθάνετο διὰ τίνα αἰτίαν εἰσερχόμενον αὐτὸν εἰς πᾶν τέμενος οὐθεὶς ἐκώλυσε τῶν παρόντων* (3 Macc. i. 13), a remark which bears a clear stamp of genuineness. It well fits in with what must have been the general knowledge of Philopator's love of raising monuments and shrines, when, at the end of the deliverance, we are told (3 Macc. vii. 20): *ὁς καὶ ἀνιερῶσαντες ἐν στήλῃ κατὰ τὸν τῆς συμποσίας τόπον προσευχῆς καθιδρύσαντες, ἀνέλυσαν ἄσινεῖς.*

I attach more importance to another incident: viz. the part played by Ptolemy's elephants in the story told in 3 Macc. Some discredit has been cast on the latter book by the very fact that Josephus repeats this episode of the refractory behaviour of certain Egyptian elephants who turn on their drivers instead of crushing the Jews. Josephus (*Against Apion*, II, 5) has this passage: "When Ptolemy Physkon had the presumption to fight against Omas's army, and had caught all the Jews that were in the city (Alexandria) with their children and wives, and exposed them naked and in bonds to his elephants, that they might be trodden upon and destroyed, and when he had made those elephants drunk for that purpose, the event proved contrary to his preparations; elephanti enim, relinquentes sibi appositos Iudaeos impetu facto super amicos eius, multos ex eis interemere." Schürer remarks (*History of the Jewish People*, II, vol. 3, English Trans., p. 217) that "some unascertained fact may certainly be the foundation of the legend, the older form of which seems to have been in the hands of Josephus, since all is in his account simpler and more psychologically comprehensible, and he was evidently unacquainted with 3 Macc. When

then the latter refers the history to Ptolemy IV instead of VII, this is already a divergence from the older legend, and still more so are the other additions with which the author has enriched the narrative."

But I think that a careful consideration of this elephant incident points rather to Ptolemy Philopator than to Ptolemy Physkon. It is surely difficult to avoid recalling the refractory behaviour of Ptolemy Philopator's elephants at the battle of Raphia, with which, be it remembered, the writer of 3 Macc. connects his whole story. This is what Polybius (V, 84) says (I cite the passage from Mr. Shuckburgh's translation): "Ptolemy (Philopator), accompanied by his sister, having arrived at the left wing of his army, and Antiochus with the royal guard at the right: they give the signal for the battle, and opened the fight by a charge of elephants. Only some few of Ptolemy's elephants came to close quarters with the foe: seated on these the soldiers in the howdahs maintained a brilliant fight, lunging at and striking each other with crossed spears. But the elephants themselves fought still more brilliantly, using all their strength in the encounter, and pushing against each other, forehead to forehead. The way in which elephants fight is this: they get their tusks entangled and jammed, and then push against one another with all their might, trying to make each other yield ground, until one of them proving superior in strength has pushed aside the other's trunk; and when once he can get a side blow at his enemy, he pierces him with his tusks, as a bull would with his horns. Now, most of Ptolemy's animals, as is the way with Libyan elephants, were afraid to face the fight; for they cannot stand the smell or the trumpeting of the Indian elephants, but are frightened at their size and strength, I suppose, and run away from them at once without waiting to come near them. This is exactly what happened on this occasion: *and upon their being thrown into confusion and being driven back upon their own lines, Ptolemy's guard gave*

way before the rush of the animals; while Antiochus, wheeling his men so as to avoid the elephants, charged the division of cavalry under Polycrates. At the same time the Greek mercenaries stationed near the phalanx, and behind the elephants, charged Ptolemy's peltasts and made them give ground, the elephants having already thrown their ranks also into confusion. Thus Ptolemy's whole left wing began to give way before the enemy."

We have, thus, a striking piece of evidence that those of Ptolemy Philopator's elephants, which were engaged at Raphia, were not easily manageable, and it is not too much to suppose that those which stayed at home were of the same disposition, and that his guards were equally incompetent to control them. Hence we are quite prepared to believe with 3 Macc. vi. 21, especially when Philopator's elephants are concerned: *καὶ ἀπέστρεψαν τὰ θηρία ἐπὶ τὰς συνεπομένας ἐνόπλους δυνάμεις, καὶ κατεπάτουν αὐτὰς καὶ ὠλέθρενον.* Nor does this exhaust the striking testimony which the elephants offer in favour of 3 Macc. For while there is evidence that Ptolemy Philopator was particularly devoted to the acquisition of elephants, and that in general, the military strategists of his day were all believers in the value of elephants in war, there is no proof that the subsequent Ptolemies had the same confidence in these unwieldy animals. I would suggest that the Battle of Raphia itself, added to the Roman triumphs over the Carthaginians, must have been largely instrumental in revising military notions on this subject. At Raphia Ptolemy triumphed, not because of, but in spite of his elephants, while the Romans may almost be said to have done the same when once they had overcome their fear of the beasts to which they were unaccustomed. According to Mr. Mahaffy's statement (p. 271) "there was recently found in Upper Egypt (Edfu) a votive inscription of Lichas the Acarnanian, the general sent up by Ptolemy Philopator to capture elephants in far Ethiopia." This is the full inscription, as cited by Mr. Mahaffy: βασιλει

Πτολεμαίῳ καὶ | βασιλισσῇ Ἀρσινόῃ θεοῖς | φιλοπατορσι καὶ
 Σαραπίδι καὶ | Ἰσιδί Λιχας Πυρρου Ἀκαριναν | στρατηγος ἀπο-
 σταλεῖς | ἐπὶ τὴν θήραν τῶν ἐλεφάν | τῶν (then after a gap)
 το δευτέρου. How pointed this fondness of Philopator for
 elephants was, must be emphasized from an earlier passage
 in Mr. Mahaffy's book: it will also show a negative reason
 against placing the elephant incident in any later reign than
 that of Ptolemy Philopator. "It must be, I think," says
 Mr. Mahaffy (p. 216), "to this king (Ptolemy III) that the
 story in Agatharchides (*apud* Phot. 14) is to be referred,
 who describes how the savages of the Troglodyte country
 killed the elephant, either by hamstringing him or by
 shooting at him with great bows worked by three men.
 They destroyed so many recklessly, as all savages are
 wont to act in similar circumstances, that Ptolemy feared
 the supply of these animals required for Egypt would fall
 short, and offered the people, through his generals, large
 rewards to preserve them. They replied that they would
 not take his whole sovereignty as compensation for their
 sport. *There is so little mention of elephant-hunting
 under any king later than Ptolemy IV, that I set this
 anecdote in the present reign.*" The earlier Ptolemies were
 far more concerned than were the later to obtain elephants.
 Philadelphus collected 300 (Polybius, V, 79) while Strabo
 (cf. Mahaffy, p. 128) tells us of the foundation of a "number
 of settlements on the Somali coast by the officers sent
 to catch elephants for the second and third Ptolemies."

Grimm rather unduly presses against the author of
 3 Macc. the somewhat different part attributed by Polybius
 to Arsinoe at the Battle of Raphia. The former (3 Macc.
 i. 4) says: γενομένης δὲ καρτερᾶς μάχης καὶ τῶν πραγμάτων
 μᾶλλον ἐρρωμένων τῷ Ἀντιόχῳ, ἰκανῶς ἢ Ἀρσινόῃ ἐπιπορευσα-
 μένῃ τὰς δυνάμεις παρεκάλει, μετὰ οἴκτου καὶ δακρύων τοὺς
 πλοκάμους λελυμένη, βοηθεῖν ἑαυτοῖς τε καὶ τοῖς τέκνοις καὶ
 γυναιξὶ θαρραλέως, ἐπαγγελλομένη δώσειν νικήσασιν ἐκάστῳ δύο
 μνᾶς χρυσίου. Polybius' narrative of the Battle of Raphia
 agrees with 3 Macc. (1) in asserting that Ptolemy won after

an initial discomfiture, (2) in attributing a brave part to Arsinoe. The differences, however, show that our author did not derive his narrative directly or entirely from Polybius. There are no similarities in the language, and Arsinoe in 3 Macc. addresses the troops during the battle, and offers them large sums of money—an offer which is regarded by some critics as highly improbable. “Ein Versprechen,” says Grimm, “welches Arsinoe, wenn sie in der Angst gethan haben sollte, schwerlich hätte halten Können.” “The promise,” says Mr. Bissell, improving on the commentator to whom he owes so much, “which she is here said to have given, she could not have been in circumstances to fulfil.”

Why not? That the writer was well acquainted with the position of Arsinoe is obvious, for, like Polybius, he terms her the king's sister, and not sister-wife, as she afterwards became. Arsinoe, as we shall see, had not passed through a happy youth, but Prof. Mahaffy (p. 276 n.) ingeniously suggests that her bravery at the Battle of Raphia earned her the position of queen. Is it unlikely then that her bravery was shown, not as Polybius says, in the calm before the battle, but as 3 Macc. would have it, in the hottest crisis of the fight, when Ptolemy's army seemed very near defeat, and was perhaps saved by her brave exhortation from destruction? That Arsinoe, Ptolemy's queen and sister, was a woman of strong and vigorous character is revealed by her face as it appears on her coin. It is a firm and determined countenance that looks out upon the beholder. The more one thinks of it, the less likely is it that Arsinoe remained, as Polybius' narrative implies, a mere silent spectator of the fight.

Moreover, in a subsequent book (Book XV, 25-33), Polybius describes the effect of the death of Arsinoe on the public mind in language which may lend additional strength to the foregoing conjectures. When Arsinoe was murdered, the truth only slowly leaked out, but when the Alexandrian populace became aware of what had happened,

their indignation was unbounded. "Though rumours," says Polybius, "which turned out to be true, had found their way among the people, they had up to this time been disputed; now there was no possibility of hiding the truth, and it became deeply impressed in the minds of all. Indeed there was great excitement among the populace; no one thought about the king; it was the fate of Arsinoe that moved them. Some recalled her orphanhood; others the tyranny and insult she had endured from her earliest days; and when her miserable death was added to these misfortunes, it excited such a passion of pity and sorrow that the city was filled with sighs, tears and irrepressible lamentations. Yet it was clear," adds Polybius, in a very inept comment, "to the thoughtful observer, that these were not so much signs of love for Arsinoe as of hatred towards Agathocles." It may well be that the author of 3 Macc. knew of this feeling for Arsinoe and also that he was aware of something in her earlier days which had won the admiration of the crowd. This something may well have been the active part attributed to her in the Battle of Raphia by the author of 3 Macc. It must be remembered that at the time of the battle she was still very young.

The further details of the events following Arsinoe's death may even be pressed into another confirmation of 3 Macc. For how does Agathocles endeavour to allay the popular resentment? He seeks to appeal to the soldiers' cupidity. Polybius tells us: *πρώτον μὲν διμήνου τὰς δυνάμεις ὠψωνίασεν*. Does not this almost seem as though Arsinoe was herself a *persona grata* with the army, and that Agathocles bestows a money gift on the troops to obliterate the memory of similar gifts from her such as the impugned statement in 3 Macc. describes? It is interesting to see that the populace was by no means appeased by this and other measures. Agathocles himself paid the penalty of his life, and yet another incident reveals the hold which Arsinoe had over the hearts of her friends. "At the same

time some young girls *who had been brought up with Arsinoe*, having learnt that Philammon, the chief agent in the murder of that queen, had arrived three days before from Cyrene, rushed to his house ; forced their way in ; killed Philammon with stones and sticks ; strangled his infant son ; and, not content with this, dragged his wife naked into the street, and put her to death." It is hard in the light of such a popular veneration for Arsinoe, a veneration evidently gained in her youth, to maintain that the author of 3 Macc. may not have had in his mind a well-authenticated popular tradition when he assigned to her so important a rôle at the Battle of Raphia. As to the large sum promised by Arsinoe, in the event of victory, possibly she hoped to obtain it from the Syrian spoils. The Syrian kings were known to keep large reserves of gold for war (cf. Mahaffy, p. 197), and Arsinoe may have expected that Ptolemy would capture these. Besides the calculation that her offer applied to the whole 75,000 of Ptolemy's troops (as Grimm supposes) is probably an error. According to Polybius, it was Ptolemy's left wing which gave way. Hence, if Arsinoe addressed the rest of the troops after this partial defeat, she must have spoken only to the right wing on which were stationed the "Greek mercenaries." We do not know what proportion these formed of the whole army, but it is a not unnatural suggestion that her promise of two minas of gold each to the victors applied solely to them.

But we need not rely on conjecture. Instead of betraying ignorance, the author of 3 Macc. really displays much knowledge when he ascribes to Arsinoe the possession of considerable private treasures. The Egyptian princesses, says Mr. Mahaffy (p. 447), "*seem to have had resources always under their control.*" Indeed one of the most remarkable facts in the history of the Ptolemies is the extraordinary wealth of the female members of the royal family. This would hardly have been inferred from Polybius, but is clearly proved by recent discoveries. The author of 3 Macc.

was evidently in possession of authentic information which Polybius either overlooked or could not obtain.

Let us now turn from this examination of the opening narrative of 3 Macc. to a passage which occurs towards the close. When the Jews, after their deliverance, returned home, we are told that they passed safely "over land, and sea, and river:" ἀνέλυσαν ἄσινεῖς, ἐλεύθεροι, ὑπερχαρεῖς, διὰ τε γῆς καὶ θαλάσσης καὶ ποταμοῦ ἀνασωζόμενοι τῇ τοῦ βασιλέως ἐπιταγῇ, ἕκαστος εἰς τὴν ἰδίαν (3 Macc. vii. 20). These words have been severely attacked. "There was no sea to cross in Egypt," says Mr. Bissel; "and the author was probably betrayed into this inconsistency by his straining after effect." Grimm said the same thing before him: "In Aegypten war kein *Meer* zu durchschiffen. In diesen groben Verstoß verfiel der Erzähler durch sein Haschen nach poetischer Schilderei." If, however, we follow the route which, according to the author of 3 Macc., the Jews took on their return to their Egyptian homes, it will appear that the author was perfectly accurate. The Jews all started together from Alexandria, and proceeded up the Nile or the natural Canal, and only parted company on reaching Ptolemais (3 Macc. vii. 17). This Ptolemais, as Grimm rightly points out, is not the great Ptolemais in Upper Egypt, but the nearer city of the same name, which was probably an anchoring-place on the Nile in Central Egypt. It was the "Ptolemais at the harbour," where, according to the Petrie Papyri (Mahaffy, 212), was situated the βασιλικὴ κατάλυσις. This and Crocodilopolis were the chief towns of the district. If some of the Jews lived in the Fayyum, they were bound to cross Lake Moeris in order to reach their homes. Now the Petrie Papyri (I, p. 43) establish the fact that in the settlement of the Fayyum Jews were allowed to found villages by Ptolemy I, and (this is of importance to another branch of my argument) the Jews of the Fayyum were not quite on a par with the Greeks. "Mr. Grenfell, among the papyri he acquired in 1895, has shown me," says Mr. Mahaffy (p. 86 n.), "one from the

Fayyum, speaking of the *σαββαθιον* (synagogue) of Aris-tippus, son of Jakoub, no doubt in Samaria there." (See p. 175 below). In another from Luxor a Jew named Danouol is mentioned. Both of these are of the second century B. C. Hence it is quite clear that some of the Jews must have resided on the other side of Lake Moeris at the time of Philopator. It will be sufficient to say that in the light of new discoveries the old belief in the extensive surface of this piece of water is fully confirmed. Strabo regarded the great lake as having once formed part of the sea, and it is at all events not improbable that, though an earlier Queen Arsinoe, in 262 B. C., reclaimed some of the district, the present lake, with a far higher level than at present, covered, in Philopator's time, some of the area now under cultivation. This, I suggest, is the "sea" alluded to so appropriately by the author of 3 Macc. as having been crossed immediately after leaving Ptolemais. In support of this theory, I cannot refrain from quoting a rather longer passage from Mr. Mahaffy's description of the lake and its approaches from the Nile (p. 173):—

When the train leaving Wasta on the Nile has passed a long cutting in the desert, through the saddle of high ground separating the oasis of Arsinoe from the Nile Valley, the traveller suddenly looks down upon a band of the richest green—orchards, gardens, farms—which extends north and south as far as the eye can reach ; from its east border he looks downward about five or six miles, till the gradual slope reaches a long, very blue lake, stretched out as the western boundary of the oasis, and beyond it the amber mountains of the Libyan desert rising abruptly from its shores. The scene is one of strange and unexpected beauty, and probably the most fascinating in all Egypt. There is now little doubt that the lake at the bottom of this oasis, which lies far deeper than the level of the sea—not to say the low Nile—is fed by the same sort of supply that fertilizes the other oases—a deep underground drainage from the mountains far south in Africa. But at present this lake is brackish, its banks far round the eastern shore are salt marshes, not fit for cultivation, and only inhabited here and there by wild fishermen, who reap the harvest of the well-stocked water.

This lake, as it now stands, is of course useless to the irrigation of the district, except to hold surplus water sent down to it. There is

no possible escape but evaporation, as it, like the Dead Sea in Palestine, is far below the level of the Mediterranean. But along the upper rim of the eastern side, the traveller coming in from Wasta finds the ample supply of the so-called Bahr Yusuf, a natural canal which leaves the Nile far away south, and runs like an independent river in its own channel. As soon as it arrives over against the Fayyum [this, I should add, would be just at the Ptolemais of 3 Macc.], it is diverted into channels running south-west, west, north-west, in curved lines, so that on the map the district seems to have a hollow cup shape. All these various arteries amply irrigate a large area, and finally make their way, sometimes through ravines, and even by waterfalls, to the lake. But yet most of the downward slope is very gradual, and the whole aspect from the desert near the Nile is, not that of a cup, but of a crescent-shaped salad-plate, deepening very gradually as it reaches the outer rim, and holding in the bottom of this curved depression the water of the lake. . . .

Now the ancients who describe the place, Herodotus, Diodorus, Strabo, give a wholly different account. Though the two latter speak of the great fertility of the province (which Herodotus does not), they all agree that the lake, which they describe as one of enormous size, was designed or applied not to make a fertile province here, but to hold surplus water from the Nile, and give it back again when the inundation fell, thus irrigating middle and lower Egypt, below the point of exit (somewhere near the present Wasta). The old Lake Moeris, therefore, which they saw, or may have seen, must have been very much higher than the present lake. Instead of being far below the level, even of the sea, it must have been below the level of the low Nile. Either therefore the Lake Moeris of antiquity was an artificial lake, made at the high level, where the Bahr Yusuf enters the oasis, and separated by a large declining slope of land from the present lake, or the present lake must then have covered almost the whole of the Fayyum. The former is the French theory set forth by Linant Bey; the latter that of the English, supported in Major Brown's recent book.

Whichever theory be true, at all events it seems clear to me that the author of 3 Macc. was guilty of no *groben Verstoß* when he represented a section of his Jews as having left the river and "crossed the sea" after reaching Ptolemais on the Nile, or the Bahr Yusuf.

The temptation to linger over details must, however, be abandoned, and some more general considerations suggested, again, by Mr. Mahaffy's new data, in favour of

the authenticity of 3 Macc., must be examined. The evidence for something like a persecution of the Jews in the reign of Ptolemy Philopator is too strong to be resisted. The persecution was not religious, but the error of 3 Macc. merely represents the popular Jewish estimation of Ptolemy's attempt to intrude within the inner recesses of the Temple. (Cf. Daniel xi. 12 a.) Ptolemy Philopator was not only a debauchee; he was an extravagant and luxurious builder, fond, as Athenaeus tells us, of constructing huge and costly ships. M. Revillout has explained the lengths to which debasing of the coinage proceeded in his reign (cf. Mahaffy, *Greek Life and Thought*, p. 486). Ptolemy Philopator must have needed money, and he may very well have thought of despoiling Jerusalem when his hopes of gaining Antiochus' treasures failed. For after the Battle of Raphia, Ptolemy, in the language of Polybius, "being thoroughly satisfied with his unexpected success, and generally at his unlooked for acquisition of Coele-Syria, he was by no means indisposed to peace; but even more inclined to it than he ought to have been: influenced in that direction by the habitual effeminacy and corruption of his manner of living. Accordingly, when Antipater and his colleague arrived, after some little bluster and vituperation of Antiochus, for what had taken place, he agreed to a truce for a year . . . and started with his sister and friends for Alexandria." What is more likely than that on the way, Ptolemy, attracted by the artistic beauty of the Temple of Jerusalem, should also have planned the despoiling of its treasures, in order to replenish his coffers? We can gain an incidental confirmation of this from the strange narrative of Josephus, with regard to the nephew of the High Priest Onias, and Philopator's predecessor. Whatever may be thought of this narrative (*Antiquities*, XII, 494), one point comes out clearly. An effort was already being made by Ptolemy III to increase the taxation of Judea. This Judean youth visits Alexandria, and is present at the auction of the taxes of Coele-Syria,

Phoenicia, Samaria, and Judea. Josephus' narrative continues at this point as follows:—"Now when the day came on which the king was to farm the taxes of the cities, and those that were the men of principal dignity in their several countries bid for them, the sum of what was bidden for the taxes of Coele-Syria, Phoenicia, Judea, and Samaria, amounted altogether to 8,000 talents. Thereupon Joseph accused the bidders of having agreed together to estimate the value of the taxes at too low a rate, and promised that he would himself give twice as much for them, and for those who did not pay, he would send the king their whole substance, for this privilege was also sold with the taxes [and usually formed the perquisite of the farmer]. The king was pleased to hear that offer, and because it augmented his revenues, he said he would confirm the sale of the taxes to him." The Jews, however, remained faithful to Egypt in its wars with Syria, for this increase of taxation did not fall entirely on them, and moreover, the pill was gilded by the honour shown in this preference of a Judean over other bidders. But in the next reign, the fidelity of the Jews has vanished. They no longer side with Egypt, and despite the victory of Ptolemy Philopator over Antiochus III, they transfer their allegiance to the latter. This was an extraordinary change, for the Jews had been for upwards of a century devotedly attached to their Egyptian lords. Some explanation is needed for this change. Mere fickleness, as Polybius suggests, is an insufficient theory, for the Jews had not been fickle to the first three Ptolemies. The psychological need of a persecution surely agrees too well with the story of 3 Macc. for us to reject the explanation which the latter so readily supplies.

What the persecution really was may be conjectured with some ease by reading between the lines of 3 Macc. It began with a pecuniary extortion, and perhaps culminated in a policy of degradation which had to be met by great pecuniary sacrifices on the part of the Alexandrian

Jews. The tendency to ascribe the rescue to a supernatural agency is quite in keeping with Hellenistic Jewish practice. Just as the Jewish Sibyl puts in her appearance at Alexandria, so the author of 3 Macc. introduces us to the thoroughly Greek and very un-Jewish apparitions who come to the rescue in the hippodrome. How thoroughly Hellenistic, how like 2 Macc., and how *unlike* the Jewish 1 Macc., is this: τότε ὁ μεγαλόδοξος παντοκράτωρ καὶ ἀληθινὸς θεός, ἐπιφάνας τὸ ἅγιον αὐτοῦ πρόσωπον, ἠνέωξε τὰς οὐρανίους πύλας, ἐξ ὧν δεδοξασμένοι δύο φοβεροειδείς ἄγγελοι κατέβησαν φανεροὶ πᾶσι πλὴν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις, καὶ ἀντέστησαν, καὶ τὴν δύναμιν τῶν ὑπεναντίων ἐπλήρωσαν ταραχῆς καὶ δειλίας, καὶ ἀκινήτοις ἔδησαν πέδαις. καὶ ὑπόφρικον καὶ τὸ τοῦ βασιλέως σῶμα ἐγενήθη, καὶ λήθη τὸ θράσος αὐτοῦ τὸ βαρύθυμον ἔλαβε. It almost looks as though this phrase πλὴν τοῖς Ἰουδαίοις was intended to silence Jewish eye-witnesses who might have denied that any such angels appeared.

But, I repeat, though the sophistication is here obvious enough, the writer has a way of revealing the authenticity of his story amid its impossibilities or exaggerations. We can with a little trouble discover exactly the designs which Ptolemy Philopator may have formed against the Jews of Egypt, but which he abandoned, no doubt for a substantial consideration. The author of 3 Macc. unfolds Ptolemy's motives in two passages. First comes the threat (ii. 28): πάντας δὲ τοὺς Ἰουδαίους εἰς λαογραφίαν καὶ οἰκετικὴν διάθεσιν ἀχθῆναι, τοὺς δὲ ἀντιλέγοντας βίᾳ φερομένους τοῦ ζῆν μεταστῆσαι. The other passage is contained in the concocted letter of Ptolemy, which seems to contain at least one element of truth, viz. (iii. 20): ἡμεῖς δὲ τῇ τούτων ἀνοίᾳ συμπεριενεχθέντες, καὶ μετὰ νίκης διακομισθέντες, καὶ εἰς τὴν Αἴγυπτον τοῖς πᾶσιν ἔθνεσι φιλανθρώπως ἀπαντήσαντες, καθὼς ἔπρεπεν ἐποιήσαμεν. ἐν δὲ τούτοις πρὸς τοὺς ὁμοφύλους αὐτῶν ἀμνησικακίαν ἅπασιν γνωρίζοντες, διὰ τε τὴν συμμαχίαν καὶ τὰ πεπιστευμένα μετὰ ἀπλότητος αὐτοῖς ἀρχήθεν μύρια πράγματα τολμήσαντες ἐξαλλοῖωσαι, ἐβουλήθημεν καὶ πολιτείας αὐτοὺς Ἀλεξανδρέων καταξιώσαι καὶ μετόχους τῶν αἰῶν ἱερέων καταστήσαι . . . οὐ μόνον ἀπεστρέψαντο τὴν

ἀτίμητον πολιτείαν, ἀλλὰ καὶ βδελύσσονται λόγῳ τε καὶ σιγῇ τοὺς ἐν αὐτοῖς ὀλίγους πρὸς ἡμᾶς γνησίως διακειμένους, παρ' ἑκάστα ὑφορώμενοι διὰ τῆς δυσκλεεστάτης ἐμβιώσεως διὰ τάχους ἡμᾶς καταστρέψαι τὰ κατορθώματα.

I am far from asserting that Prof. Mahaffy's discoveries have rendered these passages completely lucid. But so much has been revealed that it would argue considerable obtuseness in a critic who would fail to recognize that there breathes over these statements of 3 Macc. an air of literal truth. First about Mr. Mahaffy's discovery, for it is nothing less, of what I may call an *Alexandrian citizenship* outside Alexandria. That the Alexandrian citizenship entailed distinct privileges has long been known, but it is only recently that this particular citizenship has been found to apply to others than those resident in Alexandria. I would particularly point to the Fayyum, because we have already seen that Jews were settled in that district with the enjoyment of considerable privileges. But they held no land, and were not on an equality with the Macedonian veterans or κληροῦχοι. These veterans retained their Alexandrian rights under Ptolemy II, "for they speak in their wills of the furnished house in Alexandria, 100 miles distant. No doubt this enabled them to retain the privileges of that sort of citizenship" (Mahaffy, p. 77). The rights conferred were (1) the freedom from poll-tax; (2) freedom from indirect taxes on stores and oils, as is shown from the Revenue Papyrus, cols. 61 seq., where the formula frequently occurs: *καὶ ὥστε εἰς τὴν ἐν Ἀλεξανδρείαι διαθεσιν οὐ τέλος οὐθεν πραξέται*. The Fayyum Jews were on a different footing. They seem to have paid the poll-tax (*λαογραφίαν* κ.τ.λ., 3 Macc. ii. 28), and certainly must have been subject to dues on commodities, for the Fayyum Jews were entirely engaged in trade and not in agriculture. Now the passage I have just cited from 3 Macc. fits in admirably with this. The Fayyum Jews were offered by Ptolemy certain privileges which shall constitute them "Alexandrian citizens." It will be clearly seen that

Ptolemy throughout is represented as dealing with the Egyptian Jews who lived outside Alexandria, and the use of the word "sea" in the passage discussed above, leads me to infer that he was chiefly thinking of the Jewish settlers in the Fayyum district. That Ptolemy's innovation was mainly concerned with non-Alexandrians is clear enough from the whole tenor of 3 Macc., the chief element of interest being the accumulation of masses of country Jews in the capital. Thus ch. iii opens: ἡ καὶ μεταλαμβάνων ὁ δυσσεβὴς ἐπὶ τοσοῦτον ἐχόλησεν ὥστε οὐ μόνον τοῖς κατ' Ἀλεξάνδρειαν διοργίεσθαι, ἀλλὰ καὶ τοῖς ἐν τῇ χώρᾳ βαρυντέρως ἐναντιωθῆναι. From ch. iv. verses 11 seq. it appears that the Alexandrian Jews were, at least in the first instance, less concerned than their brethren in the country, and in chs. vi and vii the Alexandrians are quite forgotten and the whole interest centres in the country Jews. How the narrative ignores them is seen from these passages of chs. vi and vii. The king entertains *the Jews* after their triumph: then (apparently *all* the Jews involved) ἐνέτυχον δὲ τῷ βασιλεῖ, τὴν ἀπόλυσιν αὐτῶν εἰς τὰ ἴδια αἰτούμενοι (vi. 37). Again, he issues a favourable proclamation but (again *all* the Jews involved are tacitly meant): λαβόντες δὲ τὴν ἐπιστολὴν ταύτην, οὐκ ἐσπούδασαν εὐθέως γενέσθαι περὶ τὴν ἄφοδον (vii. 10). But subsequently: αὐτοὶ δὲ οἱ μέχρι θανάτου τὸν Θεὸν ἐσχηκότες, παντελεῇ σωτηρίας ἀπόλανσιν εἰληφότες, ἀνέξενον ἐκ τῆς πόλεως παντοίοις εὐωδεστάτοις ἄνθεσι κατεστέμμενοι μετ' εὐφροσύνης καὶ βοῆς, ἐν αἷνοις καὶ παμμελέσιν ὕμνοις εὐχαριστοῦντες τῷ Θεῷ τῶν πατέρων αὐτῶν αἰωνίῳ σωτῇρι τοῦ Ἰσραήλ. παραγενηθέντες δὲ εἰς Πτολεμαῖδα κ.τ.λ. (vii. 16 seq.).

This thrusting of the Alexandrian Jews into the background quite falls in with the suggestion I have made. Ptolemy, for various reasons which it is not hard to understand, was very desirous of simplifying the organization of the Fayyum, and in order to do this may (for a lump sum down in place of the poll-tax) have offered the "Alexandrian citizenship" to the Jews resident out-

side the city¹. But as a condition of *ισοπολιτεία*, in the public mind at least, the worship of the national gods was essential. The old Alexandrian Jews had evaded this condition, but in the new birth of regard for local feelings on matters of religion which characterizes Ptolemy IV, the king may have been unwilling to permit this relaxation to newly-admitted citizens. It may have occurred to him to find a vent for his irritation at the indignity he received in Jerusalem, by insisting more stringently than he need have done on this condition. There is some confusion here, for the author evidently cannot make up his mind whether a "stigma" (ii. 27) or a "privilege" (iii. 21) was intended by Ptolemy. Perhaps the king did not know himself. We may rely upon it that the Jews were heavily fined and perhaps ill-treated so severely as to give rise to the story of a cruel persecution. I will add just one word in confirmation of a portion of the previous argument. In iii. 21 (already quoted above) the king declares that he had two objects, (1) to confer on the Jews (of the country districts) the "Alexandrian citizenship," and (2) *μετόχους τῶν ἀεὶ ἱερειῶν* (this is I believe the correct reading; cf. Mahaffy, p. 261 n.) *καταστήσαι*. I take this sentence to mean that Ptolemy wished the Jews to accept citizenship through the road of conformity with the national religion. To this extent only was his treatment of the Jews a religious persecution. As to the pecuniary oppression implied somehow in Ptolemy Philopator's proposed change of the Jewish status, the Jews were perhaps only under this monarch beginning to feel the pressure of the complicated bureaucratic rule, which exploited the whole country for the benefit of the royal exchequer.

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¹ Cf. the similar desire of Antiochus IV "to register the inhabitants of Jerusalem as citizens of Antioch" (2 Macc. iv. 9).

merchant of Cananor, a Malabar Mahometan, and the greatest man of that place next to the king."

Pyrard, it will be seen, had a great contempt for the Jew. He summarily describes him as "the greatest scoundrel in the world." It is late in the day to dispute this severe verdict, but it is only fair to point out that the very full *quasi*-official narrative of Lancaster's expedition does not say a word about the theft of the "twelve or fifteen hundred Spanish pieces."

India Office.

B. LIONEL ABRAHAMS.

AUTHORITIES : *The Voyages of Sir James Lancaster to the East Indies* (Hakluyt Society), 1877, pp. 74-101 ; *The Voyage of François Pyrard of Laval to the East Indies, the Maldives, &c.* (Hakluyt Society), 1887, pp. 283-285.

Σαββαθιον: NOTE TO PAGE 51 ABOVE.

IN my citation of this term from one of Mr. Grenfell's Ptolemaic Papyri, I adduced that scholar's view that Σαββαθιον means "Synagogue." Professor Schürer, however, in an article just published in the *Theologische Literaturzeitung* (Sept. 26, 1896, col. 522), offers an alternative suggestion which is very attractive.

Professor Schürer admits that the translation "Synagogue" is possible in the context, but he argues that as the document in which it occurs contains a list of personal names, it is probable that Σαββαθιον also is the name of a person. Nay more, it is the name of a woman. Female names terminating in *ιον* are elsewhere found, as, for instance, *Ταριον* in a Jewish inscription at Phocæa. (Cf. Reinach, *Revue des Études Juives*, vol. XII, 1886, p. 236 sq.) Reinach has noticed other instances. Moreover, there is evidence that the masculine form of the name was also current; thus Σαββαρις occurs in the *Corp. Inscr. Graec.*, n. 9910 (cf. Schürer, *Geschichte des jüd. Volkes*, II, 518). I might also point out that the name "Sabbatai" has always been popular with Jews. At least three Talmudical Rabbis bear the name, and in the Middle Ages it was even more common. (See e.g. the Index to Dr. Neubauer's *Mediaeval Jewish Chronicles*, vol. II.) In modern times the name is

often used in the form "Sheftel," though the Hebrew form acquired unhappy notoriety in the person of Sabbatai Zevi.

I need hardly add that Professor Schürer's view as to the meaning of *Σαββαθιον* does not in the least vitiate the argument founded above (p. 51) regarding the existence of Jews in the Fayyum, during the reigns of the early Ptolemies.

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